

# The Stage—A Mirror of the Age

## THEATRICAL BAEDERK COMING

BROAD—"Lady Betty Martingale," new comedy by John Luther Long and Frank Stayton, starring Mrs. Fiske. Monday night.

GARRICK—"The Yellow Ticket," melodrama by Michael Morton, starring Florence Reed. Tuesday night.

## CONTINUING

ADELPHI—"The Truth," revival of Clyde Fitch's comedy. Grace George more delightful than ever in excellent presentation of a brilliant play.

CHESTNUT STREET OPERA HOUSE—"Pilate's Daughter," by Francis L. Kennel. Miracle play spectacularly staged. Will close October 17 for New York opening.

FORREST—"Chin-Chin," musical fantasy, with music by Ivan Caryll. Fred Stone as a Chinese mandarin, Padrewski and a lady bareback rider. Delightful music, an engaging chorus of glorious girls.

LYRIC—"Passing Show of 1914," revue from the New York Winter Garden. George Monroe and Harry Fisher grotesquely funny. Money saved on clothes elaborately expended on scenery.

WALNUT—"The Round Up," Excellent presentation of popular drama on Wild Western life, with "Shep" Camp, corpulent and jovial, as the "unloved" fat man.

## BEING FUNNY A HARD JOB ON THE STAGE

The Comedian at the Mercy of His Audience—Fred Stone and Dave Montgomery Tell "Secret" of Their Art.

"Being funny, you know, is the hardest job in the world. To be a comedian is serious work."

Fred Stone adjusted a wig with a five-foot queue, added a touch of rouge to his cheeks, and, with a toothbrush, covered with black pencils heated over a candle, beaded the lashes of his eyes.



FRED STONE As Lady Bareback Rider.

Turning about, he was the typical Chinaman—one of the twin mandarins who come to life in the first act of "Chin-Chin."

Fred Stone and Dave Montgomery are the peer comedians in America. The variety of their roles, the versatility of their mimicry, the uproarious laughter their antics evoke, are perhaps unparalleled in the history of American stage humor.

"How do you do it? How do you succeed in mastering so many parts—in putting it over?"

It was in the dressing room of Messrs. Stone and Montgomery at the Forrest Theatre.

"Why, I'll tell you," declared Stone, closing his eyes in the droll manner that is so convincingly Chinese. "We've got first to conceive the parts. How the thing's going to go we never know. Only one thing is certain in this business—our audience is the only judge, and we've got to respect our audience. We make work out all sorts of funny acts and jokes. Sometimes they get across, sometimes they don't. Now with a lot of comedians, if the audience does not respond, they say 'Gee, what an audience!' And they never try to do any better. That's the reason they don't make any great success."



DAVE MONTGOMERY—The Coy Widow Pankey.

Now, you can't fake with an audience. If they don't laugh the trouble isn't with them, but with you. Then, to be successful you've got to humor them. You've got to work until you do make them laugh. That's why I say being



Mrs. Fiske—Broad.

funny professionally is one of the hardest jobs in the world.

The call boy announced Mr. Stone's entry to the stage.

"You never know in this game what's going to bring a laugh," declared Dave Montgomery, as he was "making up" as the Widow Pankey, who makes her coy debut in the third scene. "You never know until you get out before the audience and the response comes. We may be comedians, but we've got to be convincing."

"You bet," added Stone. "You've got to feel the part. Now, I play a Chinaman in this show. I'd never made up for a Chinaman, and how to do it I didn't know."

"But we went to Chinatown, in New York," interrupted Montgomery. "And we watched the Chinese. We observed their mannerisms, their way of talking. We went into their shops and bought things and argued about the price. We'd say something to make them laugh, and things to make them sore. That way we got their expression."

"Before 'The Last Mill' was put on we traveled in Holland," continued Montgomery. "We had \$500 worth of cameras with us, and took pictures. We not only used the knowledge we gained, but the scenery was made from our pictures."

"Yes, sir; it's hard work," declared Stone. "My greatest hit, you know, was as the Scarecrow in the 'Wizard of Oz.' Montgomery learned over and whispered admiringly."

"I tell you, Fred was put on earth to play the Scarecrow."

"Thought of the Scarecrow for months," confessed Stone. "I worked and worked to conceive the character. My children helped me in that, too, and when I got the 'make up' that amused the children I felt I'd got what would amuse the audience."

Mr. Stone, having discarded his Chinese environment, was making up as "Mr. Ignited Padrewski," when he was before Mr. Stone, over his dressing table, was a photograph of the celebrated Polish pianist.

Mr. Stone was about to appear in a bit of the farcical comedy, "The Scarecrow," which each night have laughed over the marvelous performance of Stone and the self-playing piano.

"How did you conceive it?" Mr. Stone was asked.

"I had a machine piano at my house and played it, and then ran away from the piano to amuse my children. The idea occurred to me that it would be amusing to have a piano that would play after you walked away from it on the stage. When we put on this show, we tried to get a machine to make a piano that would do this. We had a great deal of trouble. They wanted me to take the thing to make the audience believe I actually played a piano. I do the thing to amuse the audience. So we finally got a piano made that played automatically after I left it, and then the audience knew I'd taken my own playing."

"But do you plan your effects upon the audience? Don't you work tricks to get them?" How, for instance, did you do the lady bareback stunt on the horse?"

"Mr. Ignited Padrewski," he never knew how an audience is going to take my stunts. I have no sense beforehand of what is going to get across. After the first performance I know what is good and what is bad. When I had to do the lady bareback rider stunt I worked on it—worked on it for months. I thought over the trick that would amuse—falling off the horse—hanging in mid-air. Finally I got the trick. Take the ventriloquist stunt—where I appear with what seems a dummy on my side. But it isn't a dummy, it's the twinning. I do the pretending. Now I never thought that would make a hit, which it has."

"Last Christmas we were playing in 'The Lady and the Slipper' in Boston, and the company decided to give a Christmas party. Everybody was to do something. I said my wife I'd be stung. 'No, Fred,' she said, 'you've got to do something. Why don't you take little George Phelps, the mountain man in the show, and take him as a ventriloquist's dummy?'"

"So I did it. Nobody in the audience of actors knew that I had a real dummy on my side. Well, Charles Dillingham saw the thing and said he wanted it in a new show. As I say, I never thought it would make a hit. I'd studied ventriloquists, knew their mannerisms, and I've seen familiar with the dress and my life. And when I faked a mountain man as a real dummy it struck the audience. If it hadn't, I'd have killed it, of course."

"You can't put anything over with an American audience," concluded Mr. Stone. "Every show needs new stunts. When I run out of new stunts I'll quit. I'll quit them before they quit me. That's my whole feeling. When there's no applause any more I'll get off the stage."

The Small Boy's West

As the big realistic scale on which it is produced, its beautiful scenery, its numerous and good actors, its backing harmonies, its abundant "gun-play," its reverberant battle between the ranchman and the Apache Indians in the desert mountains, "The Round Up," at the Walnut Street Theatre, is the epitome of the "Wild West." It fulfills the small boy's dream, and it perfectly sets forth the stirring life of the cowboy as imagined by the city dweller.

At the head of the cowboy able men in the cast Shep Camp, Herd's a delightful portrayal of "Slim" Hoover, the sheriff. In his more serious moments Mr. Camp demonstrates his tested talent. In his excellent comedy Mr. Camp, like some other famous Southerners, recalls in accent and shuckle the unctuous sympathetic humor of a kindly, fun-loving Negro.



Florence Reed—"The Yellow Ticket."



Irene Pawloska, New Prima Donna to Appear in "Sari."

## The Truth in Masquerade

Mrs. Fiske, the Woman

Mrs. Fiske and her supporting company of players, under the direction of Harrison Gray Fiske, will come to the Broad Street Theatre next Monday night for an engagement of two weeks in "Lady Betty Martingale," a new comedy by John Luther Long and Frank Stayton. While the comedy itself is new, its action takes place in 1770, in London.

Mrs. Fiske on the stage, we all know, with her abrupt movements, her high-pitched voice, her clipped speech, that curiously fascinating woman who sits still and somehow makes her audience believe she is acting—but Mrs. Fiske, artist, actress, hypnotist, off the boards is unknown. Rather unimaginable. It is difficult to conceive up the greatest of Lenny Sharp's, for instance, in the simple and rather ordinary taste of frying potatoes.

"Yet she is human, after all, and one who knows her intimately sees this picture of her."

"She reads a great deal, writes a great deal, takes long walks and sleeps about as much as did Napoleon. Very little of her life is given over to social diversion, as she has practically no time for it. Naturally, she spends much time in reading plays, although a winning process believes her from the personal perusal of the hundreds that are submitted every year, but, even so, the task is one that takes both time and patience."

"Some of her stage work Mrs. Fiske devotes the greater part of her time to the work with which she has been so long and so intimately associated, that of putting up money to the dumb creature that sees man so faithfully. Mrs. Fiske was for many years a warm friend and great admirer of the late George T. Amiel, and she was one of the first women of national prominence to enlist in his human work."

"No one can meet her without acknowledging that he is in the presence of a great personality. There are no affectations about her manner, there is no posing, no talking for effect, no aggressive enforcement of strong opinion; but one feels that her opinions have weight and authority."

"In talking with Mrs. Fiske, you realize that her artistic method is the visible expression of a peculiarly rich mental and spiritual equipment. And the versatility of her work, its wide scope, is an index to her character. No one whose nature was not broad as well as deep, and whose tastes were not cultivated in many directions could give us such versatile work in the drama."

"Her natural temperament is sunny. She has sympathy with joy and brightness, whimsical humor and the sparkle of wit. As we all know, the humorous temperament has also sympathy with and insight into the tragical."

By Their Voices Ye Shall Know Them

"The American woman has usually a harsh, strident voice, but however hard a woman's voice may be, she can acquire a musical intonation," said Florence Reed, who is starring in "The Yellow Ticket," which will open at the Garrick Theatre Tuesday night.

"Every continental traveler knows in what ridicule the American voice is held abroad. Our 'Yankee twang' has earned more ridicule than any other of our supposed national eccentricities. It is a singular fact that few women who possess high-pitched voices are aware of this defect."

"Very few of us have the courage to see ourselves as others see us; still fewer are willing to hear themselves as others do. To my mind, any physical charms that a woman may have are dispelled instantly by a sharp vocal pitch—and a provincial idiom or inflection."

"Those who travel about a great deal are able to tell from what part of America strangers hail, just by listening to them. It behooves us to lower our speaking tone, that is to say, to produce our voice tones from the chest rather than from the nose, and to rid ourselves with alacrity of the provincialisms which are the weather-veins of our 'American language.' Only in this way can we hope to compete with the charm of our English sisters, whose musical voices and clear-cut enunciation are the admiration of all the world."

## Vaudeville

Low Dockstader will make his initial appearance at Keith's next week in his unique and original character of "Teddy" Roosevelt.

A story of the Southland will be found in the presentation of a dramatic version of Irvin S. Cobb's famous story, "Sergeant Bagby," which appeared in The Saturday Evening Post. Mr. Cobb and Bozeman Bulger have collaborated in preparing it for the stage, and it is presented with elaborate scenic investiture. The art of terpsichore will be shown in an advance state in the act of Ma Belle and Ballet.

Miss Reed is a daughter of the late Roland Reed, for many years one of the most noted comedians. Miss Reed declares that when she was ready to make her debut on the stage she discovered a great detriment to her success in the possession of a nasal voice—an inheritance from her father, an undoubtedly was her dramatic talent. How to change her vocal pitch in order to fit herself to play leading roles became an immediate and important problem. The young actress decided to take the matter in hand without recourse to a vocal instructor.

In the garden of her country home Miss Reed practiced half an hour every morning reading aloud passages from Shakespeare and consciously dropping the register of the vocal tones with every spoken word. A favorite passage for this purpose was the "Merchant of Venice," which, Miss Reed declares, is peculiarly suited for developing and modulating the voice.

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Ethel Amorita Kelly—"Passing Show of 1914"—Lyric.



Helen Reimer—"The Truth"—Adelphi.

## PSYCHIC POISONING TO EXTERMINATE BAD ACTORS

Harry Fisher, Comedian of "Passing Show," Offers Novel Suggestion to Prohibit Older Than Shakespeare.

"Bad eggs! Brickbats! Cabbages! The hook! Oh, all these things have been suggested as a means to rid the stage of bad actors. The trouble is bad actors invariably stick. But at last a solution has been found—novel, effective. It should make the bad actor as rare as the mastodon."

Harry Fisher, who shares the comedian honors with George Monroe in "The Passing Show of 1914," smiled broadly. It was in the dressing room at the Lyric yesterday.

"This is an old problem, I know," he continued, "and all efforts so far to obliterate the bad actor have proved ineffectual. Now a French physician, a M. Oscar St. Ormond, has offered a solution. This is to inoculate a bad actor with the idea that he must actually fancy himself the person he represents after the theory of Diderot; so in case the character he enacts be one blighted by consumption, he must suffer the pangs of tuberculosis; if a miser person, then he must really and truly consider himself demented. The result of such careful treatment would be that all bad actors would presently find themselves clapped in jail or confined in hospitals or asylums."

"We find justification for these acts of humanity in a discussion once held between John Philip Kemble and Dr. Samuel Johnson. Kemble had told the doctor that he was not one of those enthusiasts who believed himself transformed into the very character he represents. To be sure not, replied the Doctor. "The thing is impossible, and as Garrick really believes himself, as he has said, to be the monster Richard the Third, he deserves to be hanged the next time he performs him." Garrick, not being a bad actor, escaped the halter."

"This plan of eliminating the bad actor by what might practically be called self-destruction has its merits, and is surely worthy of trial. A feasible, workable, scheme would be to induce some humanitarian manager to fix his playhouse for a season of matinees and to invite all the bad actors, who think themselves great ones, to present those plays which were strongest in their fancy. All the really unfortunates had done, but possess a tragic bent of mind, imagine they can play Richard III far better than Sir Henry Irving, Edwin Booth or even Garrick ever did, and that all that would be necessary, then, would be to inoculate these public tormentors with the St. Ormond idea and we would presently have them all fast held in the ribbon counter. As they refuse to occupy their time in such life occupations, a few matinees devoted to the Parian heroines would send the whole pesky lot to Arizona for their health."

"Think, too, of the possibilities of that great old play 'Jane Eyre' and the number of actresses that could be hunted to the gallows by a performance of two of Mrs. Fairfax, the mad wife of the drama. If, likewise, some of the really worse ones, in the way of romantic actors and comedians, could be induced to give a performance of 'Nathan Hale,' the halter would be used with admirable effect."

"A wicked performer named Bond once yielded himself up to the force and impetuosity of his imagination so completely when acting the role of Lucretia in the tragedy of 'Zara' that on the day he brought on that disaster, while fortune he fainted away and soon closed his eyes in death. Finny, the philosopher, related the story of an actor who imagined the goal so naturally that at length he brought on that disaster, while Mme. Clairton, a celebrated French actress, accounted for her prematurely aged appearance by the influence of the gods and goddesses with which she had been constantly overwhelmed year after year upon the stage."

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